REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, 5, 12 and 13 are pending in this application.

As a preliminary matter, the Office Action does not indicate that the references cited in the December 7, 2009 Information Disclosure Statement have been considered. Applicant requests that the Examiner consider the references and return to Applicant's undersigned representatives an initialed Form PTO-1449.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 4, 5, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,733,441 to Ko et al. (Ko), in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,513,795 to Gliss. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of Ko and Gliss would not have rendered obvious a fluid supply device in which a filter accuracy of a second filter means is lower than a filter accuracy of a first filter means, as recited in independent claim 1.

The Office Action acknowledges that Ko fails to disclose the above features, but cites Gliss as allegedly overcoming this deficiency. Gliss discloses a strainer having multiple layers for straining oversized particles from an extruded plastic material (see Fig. 1 and col. 1, lines 1-3). Gliss discloses that larger particles of plastic material are strained by a coarse screen, while smaller particles pass through the coarse screen and are strained by a downstream fine screen to prevent clogging (see col. 1, lines 35-44). One of the multiple layers of the strainer is a fine straining screen 40 (allegedly corresponding to the claimed first filter) that abuts a heavy backing screen 41 and a backing plate 42 having a plurality of passages 43-43 (allegedly corresponding to the claimed second filter) (see Fig. 1 and col. 2, lines 38-42). Gliss discloses that the cross-sectional area of each of the passages 43-43 is largest at the area contacting the backing screen 41 to increase the effective screening area of the fine straining screen 40 and to create some back pressure of the plastic material to support the fine screen 40 (see col. 2, lines 44-49). The Office Action alleges that the passages 43-43

have a lower filter accuracy than the fine straining screen 40 and concludes that it would have been obvious to modify Ko with the teachings of Gliss "in order to create some back pressure within the line to support the first filter means." Applicant disagrees with the assertions in the Office Action for at least the following reasons.

First, contrary to the Office Action's assertion, the passages 43-43 of Gliss do not function as a filter and cannot reasonably be considered as corresponding to the claimed second filter. Gliss explicitly discloses that the fine straining screen 40 strains out all oversized particles not caught by the medium screen 50 (see col. 3, lines 45-47). Any plastic material would merely pass through the passages 43-43 in Fig. 1 of Gliss and would not be further filtered by the passages 43-43. As such, the passages 43-43 do not correspond to the claimed second filter means.

Second, when Gliss refers to creating "back pressure" to support the fine straining screen 40, Gliss is describing how the backing plate 42 and passages 43-43 provide structural support for the fine straining screen 40. As such, Office Action's reasons for obviousness are based on an incorrect interpretation of Gliss. Further, Ko does not disclose that there is any need for the downstream filter to create "back pressure" within the line or to provide structural support for the upstream filter. Therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have predictably modified Ko with the teachings of Gliss in the manner suggested by the Office Action.

Moreover, in general, an upstream side filter's accuracy is lower than a downstream side filter's accuracy. This is illustrated in Fig. 1 of Gliss where the medium straining screen 50 (corresponding to an upstream side filter) is upstream of the fine straining screen 40 (corresponding to a downstream side filter). This is, however, the direct opposite of Applicant's claim features where a downstream side filter's accuracy is lower than an upstream side filter's accuracy.

Therefore, the combination of Ko and Gliss would not have rendered obvious the features of independent claim 1, and dependent claims 4, 5, 12 and 13. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 4, 5, 12 and 13 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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